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The
OPENING of The
New
TOWN HALL,
DEPTFORD
July 19. 1905

Drake

Frobisher



Lancaster 1891

Opening of
Town Hall,
Deptford.





TOWN HALL, DEPTFORD.

Borough of Deptford.

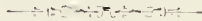
SOUVENIR
OF THE
OPENING OF THE TOWN HALL.

19th July, 1905.



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1

Members of the Deptford Borough Council.

Mayor.

JOSEPH ARTHUR PYNE, J.P.

Aldermen.

HENRY GEORGE DELATOUCHE
BENJAMIN TOM HALL

HENRY KEYLOCK
EDWARD JOSIAH KNIGHT

HARRY MARSHALL
JAMES THOMAS TELLING

Councillors.

BLAIR ABBOTT
JOSEPH SENIOR BOOTHROYD
JOHN JAMES BOYD
OWEN BROGAN
GEORGE COLLINS
EDWIN CONNER
URIAH COOKE
WALTER COX
CHARLES JAMES DAY

ALEXANDER DICKSON
JOSEPH GRAHAM HILL
DANIEL HINES
BENJAMIN JOSEPH JACOB, J.P.
JESSE JACOB
THOMAS KAVANAGH
JAMES GEORGE KING
WILLIAM LAVER
JOHN PETER LEWIS

JOHN MATTHEW REDDING
WILLIAM HAMMOND REYNOLDS
ROBERT ROBINSON
WILLIAM SHEEHAN
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ROBERT SOPER
GEORGE CARTER STONEHAM
GEORGE WILLIAM STRONG
FRANCIS THOMAS TAYLER

J. HALSTED WATERWORTH
WILLIAM HENRY WALKER
WILLIAM JOHN WALTON
CHARLES WEBB
HENRY GARLAND WELLS
WILLIAM WISE
JOSEPH WOOD
WILLIAM WOOD
JOHN VENN YONGE

Members of the General Purposes Committee.

(The Committee of the Council having charge of the negotiations in connection with the Town Hall.)

CHAIRMAN.

Alderman B. T. HALL.

VICE-CHAIRMAN.

Councillor W. WISE

Councillor D. HINES.

Councillor R. ROBINSON

Councillor J. H. WATERWORTH.

.. B. J. JACOB, J.P.

.. W. SHEEHAN.

.. H. G. WELLS.

.. J. G. KING.

.. G. C. STONEHAM.

.. W. WOOD.

.. W. H. REYNOLDS.

.. G. W. STRONG.

.. J. V. YONGE

.. W. J. WALTON.

Town Hall Building Sub-Committee.

(The Committee directly supervising the details of the Building Work.)

CHAIRMAN.

Councillor B. J. JACOB, J.P.

Alderman B. T. HALL.

Councillor W. WISE

Councillor J. H. WATERWORTH.

.. W. WOOD

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MR. H. I. HOLLOWAY,

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Church Street, Deptford, S.E.

VIVIAN ORCHARD, *Town Clerk*



B. J. JACOB, Esq., J.P.
MAYOR 1900-1901 AND 1901-1902



ALEXANDER DICKSON, Esq.,
MAYOR 1902-3.



W. A. SCHULTZ, Esq., F.C.A.
MAYOR 1903-4.

Deptford's Past Mayors.

Opening of Town Hall.



J. A. PYNE, Esq.
MAYOR 1904-5

THE beautiful and commodious building which the Mayor is to-day opening is one which varied considerations and many circumstances unite to render of peculiar interest to every ratepayer in Deptford and every resident in the neighbourhood. It therefore appears fitting that some particulars should be given as to the inception and growth of the proposal to erect a suitable building in which could be focussed the municipal interests and activities of the borough, and with this intent the following pages have been prepared.

For many years the successive local authorities of Deptford have directed their efforts towards the provision of suitable premises in which the business of the parish could conveniently be conducted, and after encountering difficulties which appeared almost

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

insurmountable, their endeavours in this direction have at last reached a successful culmination.

It would be difficult to say when and by whom was first mooted the idea of providing some building which should be the centre of local life in Deptford, and it is scarcely less difficult to trace the movement in its earliest stages. It would be safe however to conjecture that in the days when the Vestry met in the premises at Union Street, few of the Vestrymen foresaw the time when their successors would meet in a building so worthily upholding the dignity of the borough as the present Town Hall.

As far back, however, as the year 1891, reference is made in the Minutes of the Vestry of St. Paul, Deptford, to the suggested "erection of a suitable Town Hall for this Parish," but long enough ere that date the suggestion had, it is remembered, been voiced and ventilated in more ways than one.

**Fourteen
years ago.**

About that time the provision of Baths and Washhouses was receiving the attention of the Vestry, and the earlier history of the acquisition of a site for the Town Hall is interwoven with that of the Public Baths and Washhouses, which stand to-day on a site immediately at the rear of the Town Hall.

Thus, in December, 1891, the Vestry received a report from the Baths Commissioners submitting particulars of several sites available for Baths, including a site at the corner

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

of Laurie Grove and New Cross Road, the property of Christ's Hospital, and in January of the following year the Vestry instructed the Commissioners to negotiate for the purchase of this site.

In February, 1895, the Commissioners reported to the Vestry at some length on the accommodation which they considered could be provided on the Laurie Grove site (which by that time had been purchased), that a portion of the site could be reserved for the erection of a Vestry Hall and Offices, and on the 10th April, 1895, a resolution, moved by Mr. E. J. Knight, was unanimously carried, appointing a Committee to confer with the Baths Commissioners on the subject of such a Vestry Hall.

When this Committee submitted their report to the Vestry they had to point out that a serious difficulty had presented itself, as they were advised that the Vestry had no power to borrow money for the erection of a Vestry Hall and Offices. It was accordingly suggested that the Local Government Board should be approached with a view to these powers being obtained; and in May, 1895, it was decided to approach the House of Commons and the Government with the view of obtaining for Deptford the powers of a district council, under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1894 (which had then recently come into operation), among the powers given by that Act being authority to provide land and buildings for public offices and for meetings connected with parish business.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

The Baths and Washhouses were subsequently erected on the Laurie Grove site, and the portion of the site fronting New Cross Road having been reserved, plans of suitable offices to be erected on such vacant land were duly prepared by Mr. Dinwiddy, the proposal at that time being merely to erect a Vestry Room and Offices, leaving sufficient space for the erection of a public hall at a later date if required. In November, 1897, the Vestry agreed to these plans.

They were however advised that the only power which they had to borrow money for such a purpose was under the Vestries and Vestry Clerks' Act, by which Act power was given to Vestries to borrow with the sanction of the Local Government Board, the maximum period of repayment being 10 years.

At this point the efforts of the local authority in this direction were interrupted, owing to the fact that at this particular period considerable uncertainty existed as to what changes were likely to be effected in the future in the local government of London, and it was not until the proposals then afloat were crystallised into the London Government Act, 1899, that any further progress was made towards the provision of the desired buildings.

Before proceeding to trace the negotiations from the point where they were taken up by the Borough Council, as the successors of the Vestry, it may prove of interest to digress

20, Tanner's Hill.

for a little in order to refer to the extremely inconvenient and unsuitable premises in which for sixteen years the Vestry, and for five years the Borough Council, contrived to carry on the business of the parish.

Situate at the foot of Tanner's Hill the Municipal Offices consisted of two rooms on the first floor (together with the living rooms of the office caretaker) and two rooms on the second floor of the premises known as No. 20, Tanner's Hill, and in these four rooms (in the time of the Borough Council) the whole of the clerical staffs of the Town Clerk and the Borough Accountant, together with the Sanitary Inspectors, were housed during the daytime, one or more of the rooms being used in the evening for Committee and Council meetings. The room in which the meetings of the Vestry were held, and which was subsequently used as the Council Chamber, is about 37 feet by 21 feet, and in this confined and unventilated space it will



MUNICIPAL OFFICES, TANNER'S HILL.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



20. TANNER'S HILL.
COUNCIL CHAMBER, COMMITTEE ROOM AND TOWN CLERK'S GENERAL OFFICE.

be readily understood that the atmospherical conditions prevalent did not tend to moderate the heat of debate, particularly having regard to the fact that no less than 120 Vestrymen were crowded into a room which appears filled to its utmost capacity when 30 or 40 persons are present at an ordinary meeting of the Borough Council.

The apartment in question however served the double purpose of Council Chamber and Town Clerk's General Office, and sometimes no less than 10 officials could be seen working in this room every day under conditions so unfavourable as to cause surprise, not unmingled with amusement, in the minds of strangers accustomed to the office accommodation provided by private firms in the City and elsewhere.

The accompanying illustration shows the office in question, also used as Committee Room and Council Chamber: and business men will appreciate the inconvenience of all books, papers and documents being continually displaced in order that space may be obtained to use the room for public meetings, an expedient which had to be adopted nearly every week in the year.

If dirt were indicative of dignity, and lack of breathing space conducive to health and good work, there would be but little need for a Town Hall, as the present temporary offices fulfil these demands with absolute perfection: but it has fortunately been felt that apart from any claim to civic importance which might be made by a municipality such as Deptford, mere business considerations peremptorily demanded the provision of more adequate accommodation

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

for the efficient transaction of the work of local government in the Borough; and one of the earliest matters taken in hand by the newly formed Borough Council was the provision of a Town Hall and Municipal Offices.

The site available at the time of the formation of the Borough Council was the land in New Cross Road previously referred to as having been reserved by the Baths and Washhouses

Commissioners, but this being found to be inadequate, after considerable negotiations an extension of the site was obtained in 1901, when the freehold was acquired of a piece of land on the eastern side, having a frontage to New Cross Road of 27 feet.

An attempt was also made, but unsuccessfully, to obtain a similar extension on the western side, with a view to straightening the boundary of the site on that side.

It ultimately appearing impossible to further enlarge the borders of the site in either direction, the attention of the Council was directed to the accommodation which it was possible to provide, which notwithstanding the drawbacks attendant on its limited area, had the great advantage of being centrally situated.

A glance at the map will show that not only is the Town Hall as a matter of fact almost exactly in the centre of the Borough, but that it has in addition great advantages in the matter of accessibility.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

Situate in the main artery of the Borough, and indeed in one of the main roads out of London, a continuous stream of traffic passes its doors during the whole of the day, the greater proportion of the vehicular road traffic between London and North Kent using the thoroughfare. In addition, the building is very near two important railway stations on different systems; the electric trams of the London County Council pass the doors and give ready access to the whole of South London, while Clifton Hill and Lewisham High Road make the building easy of approach from the northern and southern portions of the Borough respectively.

It was at one time thought that in addition to providing office accommodation it would have been possible to provide a public assembly hall for the Borough capable of seating 800 or 1,000 persons. On closer investigation however, it became abundantly clear that if proper offices, Committee Rooms and Council Chamber were to be provided, the Public Hall would have to be sacrificed, as the site was not large enough to provide this accommodation, and accordingly the idea was reluctantly abandoned.

When it is remembered however that 40 or 50 permanent officials will have to be accommodated in the new building, and it is also borne in mind that the duties and responsibilities of the Council are continually being increased (there being even now no less than 10 Standing Committees) the wisdom

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

of this decision will hardly be questioned, particularly when due regard is had to the comparative smallness of the site.

Some delay arose owing to negotiations with the London County Council on the subject of a ten foot way for exit purposes on the eastern and western sides of the proposed building, but in March, 1902, it had become possible to take the important step of appointing Mr. John Belcher, A.R.A., then one of the Vice-Presidents and now the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, to act as assessor in regard to a competition for designs for a Town Hall.

Conditions were then prepared and advertisements issued, and eventually 45 sets of designs were submitted to the assessor, the majority proving to be in his opinion of a high order of merit, and at the meeting of the Council on the 14th October, 1902, it was announced that the successful architects were Messrs. Lanchester, Stewart & Rickards, of 1, Vernon Place, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.

The style of the firm has since been altered owing to the death of Mr. Stewart, and the firm is now known as Messrs. Lanchester & Rickards.

The whole of the competitors, together with the press, were invited to inspect the designs sent in, and through the kindness of Mr. W. J. Evelyn, J.P., who granted the use

of the premises for the purpose, such designs were publicly exhibited at Sayes Court Hall for a period of six days.

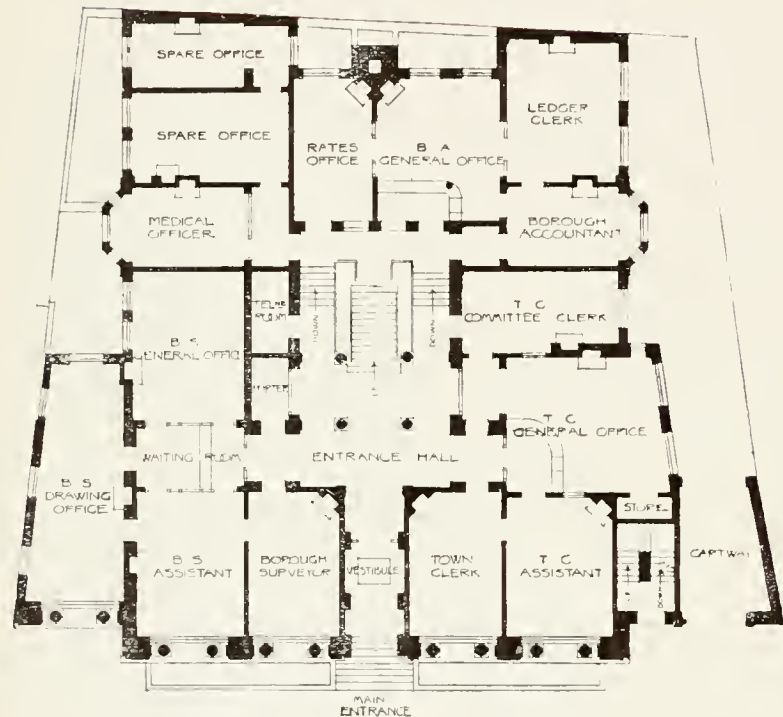
Advertisements having been issued inviting tenders for erecting the Town Hall in accordance with the accepted design, the tender of Mr. H. L. Holloway, of Union Works, Church Street, Deptford, to carry out the work for the sum of £28,433 was accepted (this being the lowest tender), and very shortly afterwards, to the great satisfaction of all concerned, work was commenced on the foundations of the building.

The then Mayor (Councillor Alexander Dickson, J.P.) performed the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the building on Wednesday, the 14th October, 1903, in the presence of the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress, the Sheriffs, their ladies, the Lord Bishop of Southwark, most of the Mayors and Mayoresses of the Metropolitan Boroughs, the Member of Parliament for the Borough, many members and officers of the Council, and a large company.

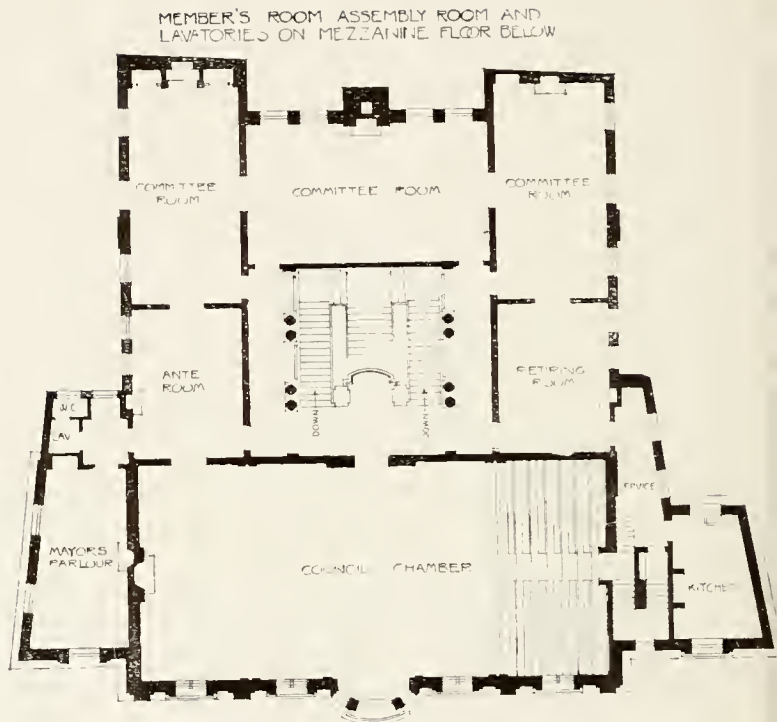
The stone bears the following inscription :—

“ This stone was laid by the Worshipful the Mayor of Deptford (Alexander Dickson, Esq., J.P.) this 14th day of October, 1903. Vivian Orchard, Town Clerk. Lanchester, Stewart and Rickards, Architects. H. L. Holloway, Builder.”

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



TOWN HALL—GROUND FLOOR PLAN



TOWN HALL—FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

In commemoration of the occasion a silver trowel was presented to His Worship by the Architects, while the Builder also presented him with a mallet, both being suitably inscribed.

Since that date the work of building has proceeded without interruption, although in several respects the original plans have been modified, improvements suggesting themselves as the work proceeded.

That the building itself is of the very highest architectural merit will be admitted by every qualified critic, but probably its most obvious features are the artistic excellence of its front elevation and the convenience and symmetry of its internal planning.

The Building.

The following particulars will give some further idea of the building :—

The Interior.

The ground floor is devoted to the principal offices and the first floor to the Council Chamber, Committee Rooms and certain of the Members' Rooms (the others being on the mezzanine floor).

In the basement is a series of spare offices, muniment rooms and lavatories, while the caretaker's quarters are situate in the western wing over the side entrance.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

On entering the building the visitor can hardly fail to observe the bold and effective piece of carving over the door: and, advancing, will see that the vestibule opens out into a pillared entrance hall paved with marble and lighted by a dome over the staircase.

This staircase faces the entrance, and the stairs being of a light coloured marble with wrought-iron balustrade and gun-metal handrail, the whole forms one of the finest features of the interior. On the landing are two wrought-iron grilles, in each of which will be seen a ship's lantern of antique design, lit by electricity, and one of these it will be seen is illustrated on another page.

The suites of rooms for the Town Clerk, the Borough Surveyor and their respective staffs occupy the front portion of the ground floor, while in the rear due accommodation is provided for the Medical Officer of Health and the Borough Accountant and his staff.

On the mezzanine floor are provided a Members' Library, assembly room and lavatories, and on the first floor opposite the top of the staircase is the entrance to the Council Chamber. This is shewn in the accompanying illustration. Entering the Council Chamber, which apartment extends across the whole of the main portion of the building, the Mayor's dais will be seen on the right and the public gallery on the left. The floor is of polished oak and the chamber is surrounded by a dark oak

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



THE STAIRCASE.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

wainscot. The general scheme of decoration is of a very refined and restrained description, suggestive of the best architectural traditions of the times of the Georges.

The members' seats are arranged in sets of three and are upholstered in dark red morocco; each member being provided with a lock-up desk.

The table in front of the dais is for the use of officers attending the Council meetings, and the press reporters' desks are in the north-east corner of the room.

A suite of three handsome Committee rooms communicating with each other occupies the whole of this floor at the rear and as these are connected with the Council Chamber by an ante-room on the eastern side and a retiring room on the western side, a connected suite of six handsome apartments is obtained, through which a large number of guests could circulate in the event of a reception or other public function being held.

The Mayor's Parlour, which is illustrated on another page, is situate next to the Council Chamber at its eastern end, and is also connected with this suite of rooms.

In the decorations of the Committee rooms the fireplaces are a special feature and deserve favourable notice.

It is, however, in the front elevation that the Architects have given most rein to the imagination and it will hardly be denied that in the whole of South
The Front. London no more artistic and tasteful piece of architecture could be found.



COUNCIL CHAMBER

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



MAYOR'S PARLOUR.

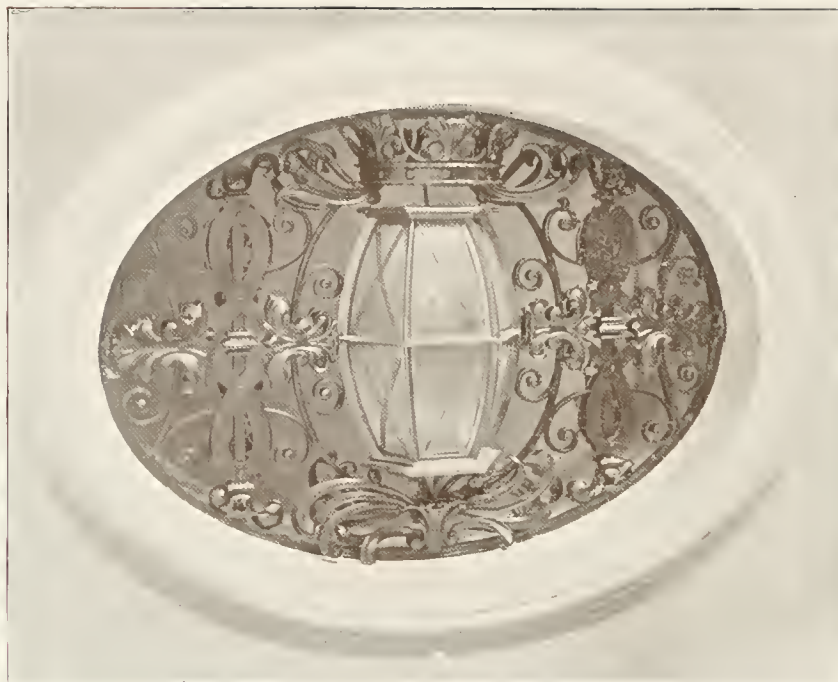
Replete with poetic feeling, and symbolic in treatment as far as its decoration is concerned, the Architects themselves have described the façade as "an attempt to carry on the tradition of the 17th and 18th century buildings in the riverside towns, such as Greenwich, Gravesend and Rochester." The naval associations of Deptford have been dexterously woven into the scheme of decoration of this façade, and dolphins and shells, cables and anchors, tridents and windlasses, appear in profusion, while over the arch at the side entrance (by way of architectural pleasantry, perhaps) a crab is seen disporting itself.

The coat of arms immediately above is taken from the Council's seal, and in one of the quarters Peter the Great is represented at work, having the crown over but not on his head, while on another is a reproduction of a ship on the stocks. These also figure in the Deptford Mayoral badge, and the public need hardly be reminded that these designs are reproduced in the drop scene of the Broadway Theatre.

More ambitious treatment is reserved for the decoration of the larger spaces, and in the tympanum of the main pediment is a representation in relief of an old-time naval battle.

No description of the Town Hall would be complete without special mention being made of the fine series of statues of British Admirals which **The Admirals.** adorn the front of the building, and form one of its distinctive features.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



ONE OF THE GRILLES ON THE STAIRCASE.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

These statues are four in number, and the figure in the eastern end position represents Admiral Drake, the date underneath carrying us back to the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth.

The gallant admiral, who is attired in all the bravery of slashed doublet and hose, holds in his hand a medal at which he is gazing, and which is attached to a chain suspended round his neck.

In the background is a globe, this being an allusion to the fact that Sir Francis was the first navigator to sail round the world. It will be remembered by those versed in local history that after the return of the daring navigator from his famous voyage in 1580, Queen Elizabeth came to Deptford and conferred on Sir Francis the honour of knighthood, after partaking of a banquet in the cabin of his ship the "Pelican," which was afterwards renamed the "Golden Hind." This ship, by command of the Queen, was for many years preserved in the dock at Deptford, and appears to have been afterwards used on many occasions, for banquets and festivities.

The next naval worthy depicted is Admiral Blake, whose leathern jerkin and top boots proclaim the period of the Commonwealth.

Cromwell's naval commander lived in troublous times, and the date (1652) underneath his effigy is that of one of his famous battles with Van Tromp, the Dutch Admiral,

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

when Blake with 23 ships compelled the Dutchmen with 45 sail to retire. Some months after, however, Van Tromp returned with overwhelming numbers and forced Blake up the Thames, Van Tromp following with the famous broom at his masthead.

Twice, however, during the following year Blake inflicted such crushing defeats on Van Tromp as have effectually prevented any further experiments of that kind being made in the display of brooms from that day to this.

The statue on the other side of the oriel window needs no description. The spare, one-armed man in an admiral's hat could be none other than England's greatest naval commander, Horatio Nelson, and the date 1805 accentuates the fact that the present year is the centenary of his death at the battle of Trafalgar.

The figure occupying the western-most position is a conventional representation of a British Admiral in the year of grace 1905 and does not represent any particular admiral at present holding His Majesty's commission.

From the above description it might possibly be gathered that the front of the building is overloaded with ornament, but as a matter of fact a single glance will dispel any such idea, as the general impression created by the decoration of the façade is one of restraint and reserve, and it is not until more careful inspection has been made that the excellence of the detail is observed.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

The note of symbolism is maintained down to the smallest trifle, as is illustrated by the wreaths underneath the admirals. Thus amid the foliage in the wreath under Admiral Drake is hung a cluster of beads and trinkets as well as a chalice and crucifix, which suggest the spoils of a Spanish galleon, or the plunder of some Spanish Church, while among the oak leaves under Admiral Blake is a clasped Bible in allusion to his puritanism.

Various orders and decorations can also be seen interwoven in Lord Nelson's wreath, and under the statue of the modern admiral can be plainly discerned his sextant and binocular.

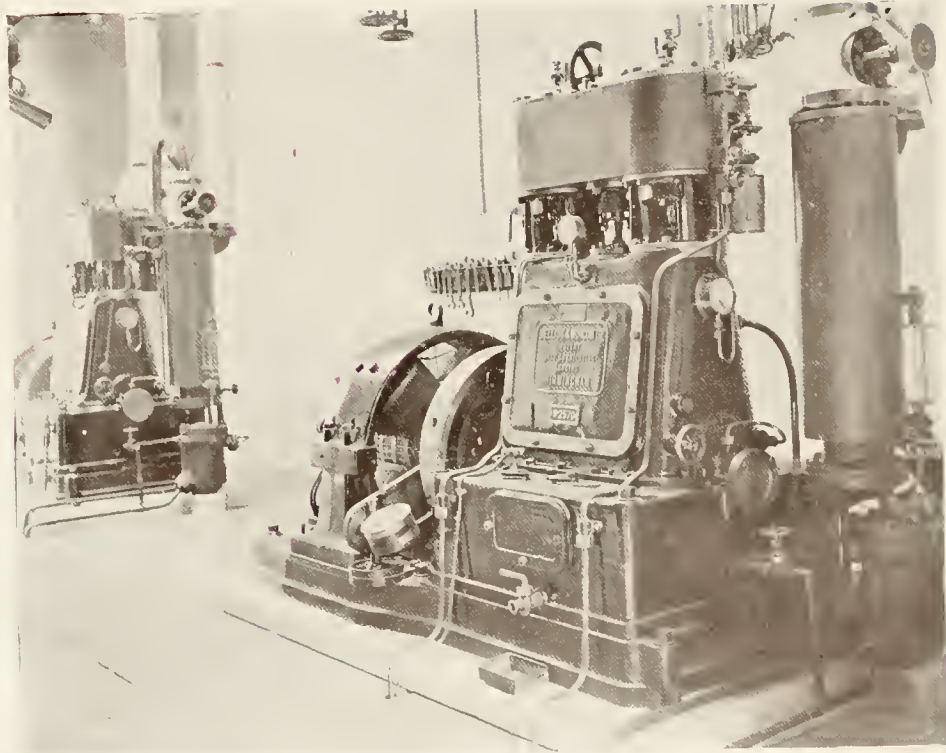
Descending to more practical matters, the following financial details will probably prove of interest. The total cost of the site was £6,428, which included a sum of £4,500 agreed to be credited to the account of the Baths and Washhouses

£	s.	d.	Commissioners, in respect of the portion of the site originally acquired by the Commissioners and transferred to the Council.
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The approximate cost of the buildings themselves is £31,228, of the electrical plant fittings and gas fittings £3,248, while the total amount spent in furniture may be put in round figures at £3,000.

The electric lighting and telephone installations have, in common with all other matters connected with the new building, received careful and detailed consideration both from the Building Sub-Committee and the Council's experts.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



DYNAMOS IN ENGINE ROOM

The question of taking current from the mains of the London Electric Supply Corporation, or of providing an installation on the premises, was fully discussed.

**The Electrical
Work.**

Having regard to the fact that an installation has been in successful operation for some years at the Council's Baths adjoining the Town Hall, where a supply of steam is always available, it was decided to add to the above equipment and to utilise the exhaust steam from the engines to heat the Town Hall.

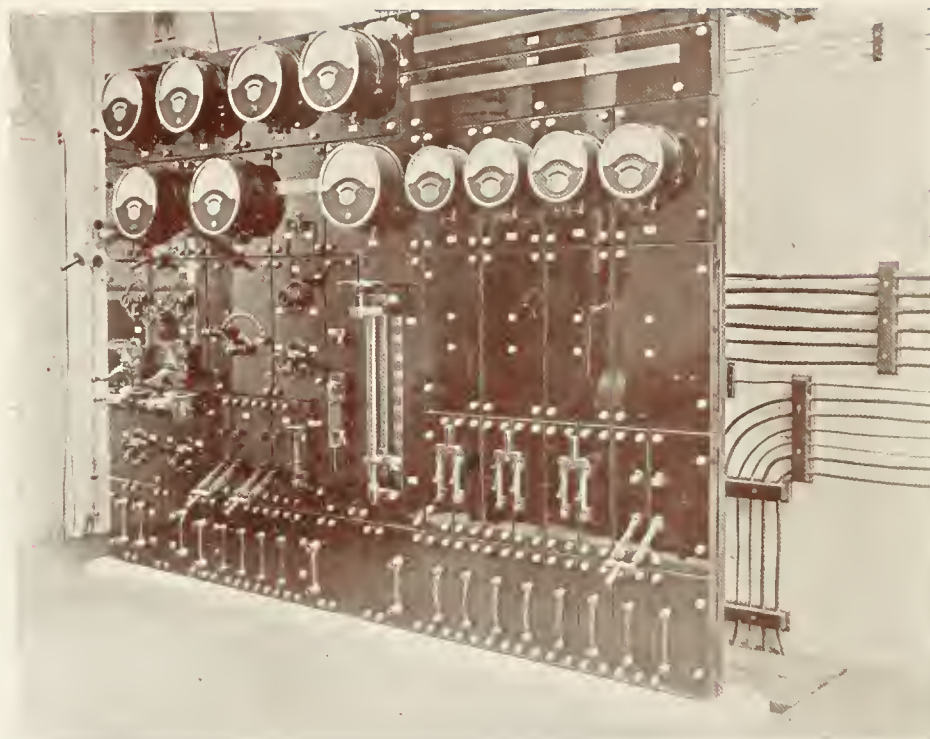
The plant has been erected in a neat and well-lighted engine-room. The walls are faced with white glazed bricks and the flooring is of red tiles, the whole presenting an excellent appearance, as will be seen from the accompanying illustration.

Two 25-kilowatt dynamos of the Phoenix Dynamo Manufacturing Company's make are provided, each direct coupled to a Belliss engine.

The exhaust steam from these engines is either taken to the heating apparatus in the Town Hall, or is utilised for heating purposes in the Baths, on a system arranged by Mr. G. Hosking, the Baths Engineer, who is also in charge of the electrical plant.

The switchboard (which is also illustrated) is the work of the Electric and Ordnance Accessories Co. Seven pairs of main cables run from this board to distribution boards in various parts of the Town Hall for supplying the lamps and motors.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.



SWITCHBOARD IN ENGINE ROOM.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

The existing storage battery has been re-erected in spacious and well ventilated quarters next to the engine-room. It has also been thoroughly overhauled and added to by the Hart Accumulator Co., with satisfactory results.

A "booster" is provided for charging the battery, and all necessary connections have been made to enable the dynamos in the baths engine-room to be worked in conjunction with the new plant and *vice versa*.

Messrs. Drake & Gorham were the contractors for the wiring of the Town Hall, which has been carried out on the "looping-in" system, with rubber insulated wires drawn into steel-armoured insulating conduit. The distribution boards are mounted in cast-iron cases, and sound metallic contact between these cases and the conduits throughout the building has been rigidly insisted upon. The conduit system is earthed in the engine-room. The electroliers and other special fittings were selected by the Building Committee, and are of Messrs. F. & C. Osler's manufacture and design.

The question of telephonic communication has been carefully thought out and three distinct systems of telephones provided:—

- (1) The National Telephone Company's instruments in connection with their exchange and the various extension instruments in the building.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

(2) An intercommunication battery system between the various members' and officials' rooms.

(3) A reply and call battery system between various rooms.

This work was carried out by Messrs. Drake & Gorham, and all the wires are drawn into steel insulating conduit, as in the case of the electric light wires.

The electric lighting and telephone installations have been carried out to the designs and under the supervision of Messrs. F. H. Medhurst & Lloyd, Consulting Engineers to the Borough Council.

As before mentioned the Architects of the buildings were Messrs. **Miscellaneous.** Lanchester and Rickards, and the Builder, Mr. H. L. Holloway, while the quantities were taken out by Messrs. W. T. Farthing & Son, of 46, Strand, W.C. The furniture for the Council Chamber was designed and made by Messrs. Walker & Sons, of 119, Bunhill Row, E.C.

A large amount of the furniture for the offices was obtained from the Globe Wernicke Co., of Holborn Viaduct, while the curtains and draperies for the chief rooms were supplied by Messrs. Maple, of Tottenham Court Road, the blinds throughout the other portions of the building being supplied by Gill Bros., Ltd., of Brockley.

OPENING OF TOWN HALL.

The whole of the photographs illustrating this Souvenir, with the exception of the frontispiece and the portraits, were taken specially for the purpose by a member of the Town Clerk's staff.

Mens sana in corpore sano is a motto the truth of which will not be disputed, and when the spacious and airy Committee Rooms and Offices in the Town Hall are compared with the four dusty rooms in Tanner's Hill, it is reasonable to surmise that in their new surroundings the members and officials will be in a position to devote themselves to the public service with increased vigour both of body and mind.

In the meantime the Imperial Parliament having bestowed on Deptford civic honour by making it a separate municipal entity, it were surely well that the municipal spirit should be fostered in the Borough, and the mere fact that in the heart of this compact and densely populated municipality, there is such a building as a Town Hall of any kind, should in itself tend to concentrate and consolidate local feeling and to stimulate public interest in matters municipal. Having regard however to the fact that the Deptford Town Hall is one of which every resident may justly be proud (and such without doubt is the building which is to-day being opened) it is to be hoped that in the future a more lively concern will be shown by the public in matters concerning the welfare and good government of our ancient and historic town.

+✂ FINIS. ✂+

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